

It appears that the proposed rules provide sufficient protection for the long distance carriers, but insufficient compensation for the difficulties experienced by the actual customer in dealing with the carrier who did the slamming.

The customer should be compensated by the violating long distance carrier for the time the customer spends correcting the violation.

In my example, it took over 9 minutes on the telephone to get the service change reversed, and I requested compensation in the form of a credit to my telephone bill for the time I spent dealing with Verizon on the telephone correcting their slamming. I requested compensation at my most recent hourly pay rate, and they refused. I think that this kind of a penalty would provide numerous protections:

1. Slamming would be more of a direct cost to the violating long distance carrier, thus providing a greater disincentive for the practice.
2. The customer would be properly compensated for the time spent dealing with an issue that should never have arisen in the first place, even though the customer would not be compensated for the numerous times he may have turned down carrier change requests made by telemarketers. At least the customer's time would not be completely wasted.
3. An incentive would exist for carriers to reduce the time taken to progress through the various phone response menus, and to reduce the time spent on hold waiting for a customer service agent, because there would be a direct cost per minute to the carrier for the delay.
4. An incentive would exist for the carrier to streamline the actual process of making the correction once contact with a customer service agent has been achieved.

Too often the fines for violations, even these particularly egregious and ubiquitous violations, go to either one company or another, or to the Federal Government. The CUSTOMER is the injured party, and the CUSTOMER should be compensated.